

A revised Abstract is provided below:

ABSTRACT

A method for recovering hydrocarbon trapped in a hydrate formation, comprising the steps of (a) contacting the hydrate formation with an aqueous solution comprising from 10% to 75% by weight of a salt such as potassium formate or acetate salt to liberate hydrocarbon from the hydrate formation and producing a mixture of hydrocarbon and water vapour; (b) transporting the hydrocarbon/water vapour mixture and the aqueous solution to a separator, whereby the said aqueous solution absorbs water vapour from the mixture during the transportation step, to form a more dilute aqueous solution of the alkali metal salt, thereby inhibiting formation of hydrocarbon hydrates; (c) separating hydrocarbon from said dilute aqueous solution; (d) regenerating the aqueous solution of step (a) by heating said dilute aqueous solution to remove absorbed water vapour; and (f) recycling the regenerated aqueous solution to step (a).